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THE
MEMOIRS
OF THE PRESENT
COUNTESS OF DERBY,
RESCUED BY TRUTH

FROM THE ASSASSINATING PEN OF

Petronius Arbiter;

AND PROVING THE STAGE, FROM THE PATRONAGE OF
THE MOST EXALTED PERSONAGES, TO HAVE
BEEN ALWAYS CONSIDERED AS

A SCHOOL FOR MORALITY.

The K—	Julius Cæsar	Augustus Cæsar
The Q—	Empress of Russia	Dionysius
Louis XII.	Dutchess D—	Prince Dei—h—n
Louis XIII.	Scipio Africanus	Bishop Tr—i—no
Earl D—y	Duke of P—r—a	Cardinal B—na
Lord Ch—n—r	Sophocles	Cardinal M—s—n
Lord St—y	Euripides	Cardinal R—l—u
Moliere	Plato	Corneille
The Christ. Missionaries	Mr. W—d—d	An Edict in France, &c.

BY SCRIPTOR VERITATIS.

If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague for thy dowry. Be thou
as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny.

HAMLET.

MANCHESTER:

PRINTED BY G. BANCKS.

1797.

RB 23 a 7010

APOLOGIA.

HAD I read in the metropolis, the insidious attack upon a dignified pattern of female excellence, I should have spurned the production, as too despicable for notice; and condescending to disprove the slander, would be, (like explaining, *why day is day, night is night, and time is time,*) wasting time; or in the vicinity of his lordship's extensive manors, where her visits always cheered, like the returning sun-beams after a dreary winter's night.

But, as a traveller forced on business to associate with all classes in various country towns, I have witnessed, with what avidity the scurrilous pamphlet was bought up; therefore have yielded to an irresistible impulse, and committed the following sheets to the press. I knew her ladyship's father when a boy, he possessed too great a spirit in servitude "to wait for dead men's shoes," he left home to seek independence; and his uncle, a peevish rich old alderman, altered his will, and made another relation his heir.

In journies through country towns, I have remarked crouds opposite a print-shop, attracted and delighted by caricatures, human beings vilely distorted, whilst beautiful nature, rivaled by the strokes of Raphael, the tints of Titian, and warm glow of Carlo Marat, displayed in the neighbouring windows, had not arrested the attention of a single passenger: much the same *gusto* may be discerned in those who read periodical productions, at least in antiquated maidens, who never had an opportunity of saying, No! they now, *thank their stars, that they are uncensured.* It is for such people I venture the critic's lash; her ladyship has too much goodness of heart to be displeased, at my introducing names into the work which never again can move in the same sphere with her, and whose blemishes were never considered but as contrasts to her purity. What may we not expect from the charities her ladyship is preparing, where precept will be enforced by the example of the patroness? future generations will have reason to bless the day his lordship made his happy choice, and always pray, that virtue may be rewarded with nobility.

S. V.



MADAM,

I FLATTERED myself that the hint I gave you in my letter, would have drawn some lines from your elegant pen, particularly when such a pleasing subject was presented—The merited elevation of Thalia's most favorite votary. At that time I had not seen the scurrilous pamphlet which was the topic, or I should have apologized, for wishing you to answer such a malignant garreter: but I was convinced from your partiality to the stage, that you would have embraced the opportunity, to prove t at the Green-room, though, by some illiberally stiled a seminary for intrigue and dissipation, cannot vitiate innate principles of virtue; nor the pathos of ardent passion, enacted by manly youth and beauty, fascinate a pure mind, and raise a flame beyond the controul of female fortitude.

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To steer clear of censure in a theatrical line is nearly impossible : vanity prompts many young men of education to embrace the profession ; who, thirsting for news-paper fame, relinquish every other pursuit, and flatter themselves, applause on the boards will fix them, in such favor with the public, that some wealthy fair one may fall an easy conquest, and fortune smile on them in making a matrimonial exit ; whilst others, less continent or prudent, give themselves up to the practise of seduction, and in the end ; caught in their own snare, are obliged to connect themselves to female performers of merit, and rely upon a stage partnership for life, to provide a competency for old age.

Let me pass over those unworthies who waste the prime of life in dissipation and profligacy, who pay no regard to the opinion of the public on their private characters, nor give themselves time for improving their professional talents ; 'till overtaken by premature age, they are discharged from the station they held in London, and forced to seek a precarious subsistence in provincial companies ; where they assume a consequence, from being announced in the bills, late
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of the Theatre-Royal, Drury-Lane, Covent-Garden, &c.: those are the people most prone to censure, and disseminate scandal in order to reduce the reputation of others to their own standard; or, by ruining the fame of an unprotected female, think they can easily make a prey of her, and bind her rising abilities over, to support their own extravagant course of life.

I was well acquainted with the modern Roscius and the Aristophanes, whose memories will live and be revered, as long as typography remains. I had the happiness of being intimate with the late Mr. Coleman and with most of the capital performers, that have shone before, and since Miss FARREN appeared a luminary in the theatric hemisphere: I have had access to rehearsals and to Green-rooms, yet never saw cause for censuring that lady's behaviour, or ever heard the slightest hint, to the prejudice of her private character. There was something like an electric quality in her demeanour, that whilst her lovely figure, affability, and lively conversation, attracted all hearts, protecting nature had endowed her with a repelling power which awed to respectful distance. If any blemish had been

discovered, most certainly, it would have been recorded in some Green-room witticism, or *bon mot*, by her associate performers, and had been the topic at all theatrical clubs, or places of social resort, where actors spend the evenings and give loose to humour over the flowing can or circling glass. Few gentlemen partook more of such conviviality than I: that lady was frequently the topic: censure on her moral conduct, never was breathed, though criticism on her performance, sometimes mingled in the discourse. A character passing through the Green-room ordeal unsinged, is stamped with sterling purity, and like virgin gold, loses not a grain of its weight by passing through the hands of the refiner, ought to be revered: and notwithstanding she had many admirers in the sock and buskined corps, who contended to make her their stage property; of course had many rivals in her own sex; yet neither, the rage or mortification of disappointment, could ever force a degrading epithet to tarnish her fame; nor did her out-shone rivals in Thalia's court ever find cause to sully the brightness of her fair reputation. Her mother was constantly with her, and, when she went to the Green-boxes to see a play, sat by her. She dressed so plain,

plain, that the box-lobby loungers saw nothing to lure them into a conversation, which they all knew, or saw, she most prudently and cautiously avoided on every occasion.

Then what sort of feeling must the wretch have, who wantonly attempts to throw a shade upon such an exemplary female ? Nothing could have checked his malicious purpose, but the dread, that the powerful protection that lady's attractive merit had acquired, would ferret him out of his concealment, and drag him before the tribunal of the law, where he might receive a punishment, similar to that inflicted by Apollo on Marsyas, viz. to be flayed alive ; which in our modern way, is done by Jack Ketch with a cat of nine-tails.

The ill-natured scribler, who assumes the signature of *Petronius Arbiter*, and has the effrontry to boast of being a descendant from that pander, to the most debauched court in the annals of history, his ancestor and name-sake : should have known, that he was paying a very bad compliment to the reigning power, which protects him ; by his attempt to introduce a species

of biography, only countenanced in the reign of the most infamous of tyrants, the Emperor Nero; a man, who surpassed all others in cruelty, *ingratitude*, *rapine*, and sacrilege; that murdered his mother by whose means he got the empire; also his wives, and relations; the virtuous Seneca his preceptor, and put the christians to the most cruel torments his infernal fancy could invent. He took delight in the groans, the tortures forced from them, on public stages, which he enjoyed as a concert in the day time, and their bodies wrapped up in pitch coats, were lighted as torches and amused him as fire-works in the night. This detestable Emperor committed further outrages against human nature: he dressed himself in womens cloaths, put on a yellow veil, such as in those days was usually worn by a bride, and was publicly married to Pythagoris one of his bestial companions; he also married Deniphorus; afterwards became the husband of Sporus, a beautiful youth, who was deprived of virility in his childhood: but fate at last o'ertook him, he was deposed and condemned to die, *M-re Majorum*, according to the rigour of the ancient laws; which when on enquiry he heard meant, that he was to be stript naked, his head fixed in a pillory, and

and there scourged to death ; he put a dagger to his throat, accused himself of cowardice, and his servant Epaphroditus gave the mortal wound. After such a picture of enormities, who would imagine that a subject to the mild and virtuous George the III. would venture to assume the name of a minister to the pleasures and companion in the enormities of that disgrace to a diadem. From writing the infamous scenes of luxury and debauchery his master revelled in, he acquired the name of *Nequitiae Arbiter* ; and, from having wrapped up some of them in a decent style, he was also called by Tacitus, *purissimæ impuritatis Auctor* ; but our modern copyist of the vile biographer, *Petronius*, means to reverse the character to *impurissimæ puritatis Auctor*, and reduce female purity to the standard of Nero's court by the most impure and false insinuations, such as must expose him to the contempt of his Sovereign, who delights as much in virtue as the patron of *Petronius Arbiter* of Rome, gloried in vice.

Our most gracious King and his Royal consort, by their exemplary conduct, endeavour to make virtue fashionable at Court ; and have always

ways given protection to females of character who through necessity have embraced the stage as a profession. The widow of a gentleman much revered for his professional abilities, literary talents, and amiable qualifications, by unforeseen misfortunes was forced to solicit introduction to the stage for a livelihood; and her Majesty had conceived so great an opinion of this lady's prudence and abilities, that she recommended her to Mr. Garrick's patronage, saying, she hoped the example of that lady would remove the general aspersion illiberally thrown on the ladies of the Green-Room:—Mr. Garrick accordingly introduced her at Drury lane, in the first cast of characters, and played with her many times successively. But neither her figure or voice could secure the patronage of the public: yet her private character insured her the smiles of Majesty; the Royal Family honored her performances with their presence, and flattered themselves, that, by perseverance in the rules of strict propriety, every actress would find that following the example of Mrs. C—— would be the most effectual means of rising to consequence and fortune. But, alas! her sensibility realised the passion she meant to represent: the actor
who

who succeeded Garrick, in his cast of character, played the lover so much *al core*, that the unfortunate fair was enthralled. The busy talking world proclaimed her indiscreet attachment, and the daily prints furnished with intelligence by those who envied her; even in her degradation, rang changes on her lapse; and she is the paroxysm of passion; vindicated her *Enamorado* whose name she took: although he had then married, wives in being, she took the whole censure on herself and attempted to prove him blameless.

It is easy to imagine that such a falling off must in a great measure act as a check upon Royal patronage in future, and nearly prove the impossibility that a lady of beauty and accomplishments, devoid of male protection, could steer through the streights of pleasurable attraction, and avoid the Scylla and Charybdis of Seduction, whilst youthful bloom fans the amorous gale.

But Miss F . . . having performed this perilous and uncertain voyage without any pilot but her mother's watchful care, and steered clear of censure till she had attained the safe port of Hymen; the envious Satyrist endeavours to appall
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her joyful entry by forged catalogues of charges—such as the baseness and poverty of her ancestry, the distresses or dissipation of her father, his associating with itinerant players, misrepresentation of his marriage with the mother of Miss F . . and the distresses that attended her after his death ; therefore I shall wade through the channel which *Petronius* has endeavoured to be-foul, and shew it clear from its very source.

Petronius says Miss F . . . derives from her ancestors ‘ neither glory nor fame ;’ yet he adds, some historians say she is related to some of the first families in Ireland, and in the same lines he hints that the lady is beholden to a charitable institution for the support of her infancy—by which he contradicts the first assertion ; for *he* knows the Irish families are too proud to suffer a relative to be reared by public charity—and he adds, that when grown up she trundled a mop for a tradesman. If both these anecdotes are untruths, as he declares, why produce them in his narrative, which he mis-calls *candid* ? The reason to me is clear : he meant to invalidate, what, if necessary, can be easily proved, that the father of her ladyship was allied to a number of the most respectable

able families in his own country, and that he had a genteel education ;— for it is well known a young man cannot be apprenticed to an apothecary, particularly in Ireland) before he has gone through an examination in the Greek and Latin classicks—in China acquired honors ennoble ancestry. But do not descend to posterity : was that law in this country, we should not see so many high titles, coupled with *crim. con.* in the public prints ? The man that holds up poverty to public view as a crime or a disgrace, would be guilty of any dishonourable action to shelter himself from its overbearing gripes : but it is not held so much in detestation in Ireland, where families glory in hearing the good deeds of their ancestors recorded in funeral obsequies, and dread leaving a stain on their name, lest it should be cast as a reflection on their children, in case of any dissensions between families ; they would prefer wearing a threadbare coat in their life time, to prostituting themselves, or their talents, to raise the means of living in luxury, like unto the associates of *Arbiter*, the vile Nero's biographer, and leaving a tattered reputation behind them, to reflect disgrace on their offspring.

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The satyrist's creative fancy has formed a corps of itinerant players passing through Ireland on foot, in the greatest degree of wretchedness; and Mr. F—n “thinking it more honorable to tear a passion *to tatters, to very rags*, than to pound nitre and rhubarb, embraced an early opportunity of joining this company of performers as they passed through the town he lived in; tired at length with the wretchedness of the condition of a strolling player, he found his way to Liverpool, and was engaged by the manager to play second parts.” In the first place, players of such a description as Petronius gives in his note would not be suffered to perform in Cork; for it is well known the inhabitants of that opulent place, are mostly merchants that have travelled through various countries, to form commercial connections, and are infinitely more difficult to be pleased, than those of the metropolis*. However it is
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* The Irish are lively, inquisitive, and quick of imagination: English, not being the mother tongue, they for the most part learn it grammatically; and, as the native language is figurative and picturesque, they are apt to misplace words when they translate literally from their own conceptions, in the Irish idiom, whence so many bulls or iricisms; and they are never spared when they make
a blun-

acknowledged he displayed merit, even in that disreputable troop, sufficient to make him fill the second characters on the Liverpool stage, which is nearly as nice in the choice of actors, as Cork, where it is said Mr. F. made his debut: "but being fond of ale he frequented a public house, where the *daughter, a pretty fresh faced, smirking wench*, took a sincere affection to him, and they were married about the year 1758.—By this time they had four children, which by the prudent œconomy of the mother, were brought up with decency: but at the end of 12 years he died, and the family was reduced to the greatest distress." When I oppose the real situation of her ladyship's mother, it is only for the sake of truth: for those who are well acquainted in Liverpool, know that branches of the most respectable people in the place, keep public houses. The gentry and merchants, seeing the widow of a sea officer, (that lost his life either in his Majesty's, or in com-

a blunder, to which foreigners allow them to have an exclusive privilege: they are in their turns upon the watch to detect others in-
 croaching upon their rights of blundering, and sometimes retaliate with vivacity, and if a word has many significations, they will pretend, for the sake of drollery, to comprehend it in the most ludicrous sense, only to produce a laugh.

mercial

mercial service,) left without a provision, unite their interest, procure her a license to keep a tavern, institute clubs and give entertainments at the house, until it is established in full business, and they protect the family from insult.— But the real fact is, Mrs. F. kept an haberdashers shop at Tewksbury, where Mr. F. had joined a country company, became a great favorite of the town, and married lady D—'s mother. The people of Liverpool and Manchester recollect the family perfectly well, and in the latter place the house is shewn where her ladyship was born; moreover, every one that knew her from her infancy declare, that they think she is in every respect qualified to fill the high dignity she has attained.—Knowing the general dispositions of country performers, and how much they are indebted to the *humanity* of managers, I will grant that Mr. Whitely, seeing the probability of some advantage to be made by the talents of this distressed family, recommended them to his friend Mr. Younger, at Liverpool; who, from his own account, found them a valuable acquisition: and no wonder, that those young ladies, when unexpectedly put into the first line of character on the stage, should be obliged to borrow some stage properties,

properties, for their first appearance, (which the censorious scribler calls subscribing,) a thing practised every day in the Green-room. But in this charge, he shews the manager to be very poor, or at least not endowed with a generous heart; for he states, that he procured the family *credit* with his tradesmen for such cloths as enabled these young women to dress suitable to the characters they performed: but had their merit not ensured success, had he not left their persons liable to be arrested, for the very dresses they had worn, whilst bringing in money to his treasury? When Younger saw this promising actress rising in public favor, and every day improving in her profession, “ he took her as an artied pupil,” and the generous man, lest her merit should be buried in obscurity, by strolling in his company, obtained an engagement for her, at the Haymarker Theatre, from Mr. Coleman; and, what cannot be doubted, whilst he made an honorable engagement for his pupil, he secured a handsome proportion of salary for himself; which is the custom amongst music-masters, dancing-masters, and performers, when they get an engagement for an apprentice. This recompense makes them attentive to the instruction

tion of their pupils, and to enhance their merit; for, in proportion as they can get their salary raised, the master draws the *surplus*, allowing only a decent maintenance to his pupil. *Petronius*, in order to extol his friend and make the lady appear unamiable, says “the friendship of Mr. Y . . kept pace with her deserts; he got her an engagement at Covent-garden, and afterwards at Drury-lane”—doubtless with increased salaries, and her benefit nights, of course, produced double profits: these fresh obligations this *benevolent* manager heaped on his much admired pupil, merely for the disinterested purpose of sharing the best part of all the money she received.

Now he has brought her to this line of pre-eminence on the stage, he begins to spit his venom at her private character, by insinuating that she had a *penchant* for the handsomest man at the Theatre—one well known amongst the Cyprians for intrigue; and he attempts to enforce a belief of it, from the sarcastic constructions put on a word the young lady spoke innocently in the Green Room. But the vanity of Mr. P . . is so well known, that if he had been suffered to
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take any liberties beyond the strictest rule female delicacy could permit, his companions would soon learn his triumph, and it would have been proclaimed to the world by the Theatrical Paragraphers. He in the next page attempts to raise disgust at her figure, in her performance of Charlotte in the *Suicide*; he says that her appearance in breeches extinguished all the flame that her elegance and beauty in female dress had kindled in the breast of the patriotic Man of the People; who, but for the disgust he then conceived, might have been her admirer to this day—Alas ! poor lady, what a loss !—however, in order to keep up his claims to the signature he assumes, subjoins in a note, that a noble lord, whose unnatural propensities were then much talked of, declared, on seeing her in the *Suicide*, that she looked like a fine awkward growing boy, and would make a charming companion in breeches. In these remarks he displays no judgement in the symmetry of the human frame : for a well made woman would be but a bad figure in men's clothes—nay, if pantaloons and a short jacket were put on that *chef d'œuvre* of Statuary, the *Venus de Medicis*, it would lose all its beauty ; except in eyes of one of the same taste with the nobleman. Here I

am led to remark on the cruel situation a young lady of delicacy is placed in, whilst acting as an apprentice to a manager. There is no woman but must feel a great repugnance at appearing before an audience in men's clothes : but no one would make such an attempt, who had the least suspicion that a defect in the proportion of her limbs might thereby be exposed, unless compelled by the strictest articles of engagement to appear in all casts of characters her manager allots her ; also, in case of refusal, forfeiting her engagement, or the penalty upon her bonds-man being put with force. Young ladies in signing articles of engagement, may not be aware of such parts being allotted to them ; or if they were, probably, they depended on the manager's verbal promise, and therefore had made no saving in the writings to that purpose. The apprentice being delivered over at the discretion of her master, to any manager that makes him the best proposal, may meet with a man, who for perhaps base purposes, might give the young actress characters, that would disgrace her with the public, in order that he may accomplish his wicked designs in private.

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The binding of females apprentice to the stage, is an incitement to a species of kidnapping the lovely part of the creation. A stage crim^{*}, seeing a beautiful child, might bargain with the parent for a certain sum, to have this little one indentured for a term of years; the mother viewing only the sum, which relieves her present distress, and the prospect of her child being educated as a young lady, without any expence to the family, does not consider the temptations and snares, she exposes her offspring to; and that her daughter will be made transferable, at

* For instance, the late D. Davis, of the Haymarket-Theatre, advertised for young ladies that were desirous of appearing on the stage, to receive instructions from him, and had frequently a licence to open that theatre for plays; which were performed by his pupils, and by such as would take tickets to a certain amount for the performance: accordingly they had the character they chose. A lady that was the favorite of a colonel, took 50*l.* worth of tickets, for liberty to play one night the first cast. She afterwards ventured and took 40*l.* worth for which she gave her note, but then her connection was dissolved, tickets remained on her hands; D. D. arrested her for the balance; at length she and her bail were thrown into the King's Bench, which put a final check to her theatrical mania: many similar circumstances might be produced. Those sort of licenced nights were looked upon only as exhibitions of women, who wanted to try what the power of their charms could produce from the best bidders at market.

the will or as the interest of her master directs, at the time she is playing in a distant county or a kingdom, far from the protection of her family. But, if the child does not from her natural talents promise success on the stage, they depend entirely on the girls beauty, to recommend her to notice, and to draw an audience. I will not here take a peep behind the curtain, to discover the various arts, itinerant, unprincipled managers use, to keep actresses in a state next to vassal dependency : the number and variety of fines they exact, the mortification they can make an actress undergo, by taking away her favorite character, giving it to one they wish to outshine her, and unless the poor actress accepts a character, which she thinks must lower her in the eyes of the audience, refuse her salary, dismiss her from the company, or arrest her for breach of articles. The children of players and of musicians have a natural propensity to follow the track of their parents ; they become very frequently proficient, without knowing how they have acquired merit ; in their very infancy they sometimes surpass the veterans. The late Mrs. Baddely, for instance, was daughter of a musician; at fourteen years of age she was a most beautiful

tiful creature and sung divinely ; the musick inspired her with such modulation in speaking, that she was a most expressive actress without being able to give a reason for any climax or anticlimax. Mr. Garrick has been heard to say, he scarcely heard Mrs. B. speak a line incorrectly or with false emphasis, and he styled her the beautiful idiot. As actors generally bring up their children to their own profession, they ought to have them taught to dance, in the earliest age, as it renders them gracefully upright in their carriage, it strengthens the muscles, and makes them fitting to appear in the first line of characters, when they grow up to maturity.

I shall now return from my digression to where the biographer has acknowledged Miss F——, was noticed and patronized by ladies of the first fashion, some of those most particularly attached to her he names : then he attempts to throw a slur by saying, “ the lady with great *hauteur*, rejected a *carte blanche* from the lusty Earl, and he was obliged to atone for the insult offered, by the most humble submissions.”

These truths seem to have escaped his pen, or else he artfully introduces them, to sooth the readers mind, irritated as he vainly supposes, by the sensations of disgust his satire has raised ; and in order that his next meditated attack should in such a state of tranquility make a more irresistible impression.

Thus assuring himself of success, he proceeds to make a grand assault upon this fair repository of the virtues, combined with the graces ; and lest any auxiliaries might appear in her defence, he attempts to poison the minds of the people with a *nostrum*, more powerful than any composed by *Locusta*, the ministering fiend of poisons to the diabolical Nero.

Although ingratitude is looked upon as a crime of the blackest hue, no action will lie against the person who charges another with that abhorred sin : thus fearless he advances to shew the lady in a degree of prosperity, even of splendour, which he remarks too often banishes gratitude and feeling ; then he opens his envenomed plea of *ingratitude* against her, and brings up her conduct to the *generous* guardian of her youth
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in support of his charge, saying, “ Mr Younger, a few years after the young lady’s first appearance in London, was by ill health compelled to resign his situation as stage manager of Drury-Lane, and he removed to Liverpool ; where for the most part he resided. The wish however, of conversing with his old friends, induced him after a long absence to visit the metropolis :— Shortly after his arrival, anxious to behold the happiness which his *benevolence* had been the chief means of creating, he knocked at Miss F—’s door, and sent in his name : when the writer of these memoirs blushes for the fact while he relates it ;” the *embryo* countess sent out an answer by the servant, “ that she knew no such person”. *Let me not name it to you ye chaste stars, Petronius Arbiter*, for once has blushed ! but whether it was conscious guilt that flew in his face, or that he saw the object he meant by his tainted breath to tarnish, was of such a high polish, that its brightness instantly re-appeared, more dazzling, after his impotent attack, must be for the reader to determine. However, he has shewn, that the words of the immortal English bard are true. *If thou dost marry i’ll give thee this plague for thy dowry, be thou as chaste as ice, as pure*

pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny : and without intention has given an opportunity, to obviate every thing that might have been said by whisperers, or envious slanderers, to make that lady unaimable, in consequence of her engagements with Mr. Y——r.

The obvious reasons for a manager taking pains to raise the fame of an articulated pupil, were fully answered. The young lady had her tutor's interest equally at heart with her own fame ; for the satirist allows that, by unabated endeavours to gain pre-eminence in her profession, she succeeded beyond his most sanguine expectations ; whereby she conferred heavy pecuniary obligations on her manager ; for he drew more from her encreasing salaries, than he ever received from his own performances as an actor.

But when managerial speculation, monopoly or dissipation, had brought him to distress, all those benefits he received from his fair pupil were forgotten ; he compared his falling situation to the towering heights, Miss F——n's abilities had raised her to ; she in her equipage, and he
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the boasted patron and promoter of her good fortune, alas ! reduced to walk on foot. Some of his commiserating companions may in course say, apply to the lady she cannot be so ungrateful to deny some pecuniary assistance, to extricate you from your temporary embarrassments ? whilst others, who look upon the Green-room as the manager's *Haram*, where his favored slaves or apprentices, might think it an honor to pick up his handkerchief, would suggest that one who owed her rise to his tuition, certainly would think it prudent to become tributary on such an occasion ; and under the mask of gratitude, bribe him to speak of her in the highest terms possible.

The satirist to strengthen his charge of unfeelingness, produces another trait ; he represents her taking leave of the performers, as “ *a scene that would have drawn tears down the cheek of frozen apathy !* men, women and children, bewailing the loss they should sustain by her secession, and a principal vocal performer sobbing for a quarter of an hour. In the general grief of the Green-room her ladyship alone was unmoved, on quitting

ting those friends by whom she had been caressed for near twenty years.

Here he gives a strong instance of the lady having been in the habit of displaying the social virtues, by shewing the whole company of players drowned in tears, at finding themselves on the eve of being separated for ever from a character beloved and admired by all. Is it then to be supposed that a lady so universally beloved, could be ignorant of any insinuation her *quondam* manager had permitted to go forth, respecting the manifold obligations he had conferred upon her? obligations, that if any ever existed, were amply compensated by the money he pocketed of her acquiring; and long had been cancelled by his vain boastings, namely, that he had raised her family from indigence, merely from a motive of humanity.

What an opening for satire! had Miss F——, after taking leave of the audience, resumed the character of an actress, and wept a *finale* at parting? what a compliment to the engagement she was shortly to ratify for life; if she appeared overwhelmed with grief, at resigning the mimic dignities

dignities of the stage, to be introduced to real honors and rank at court ? Like a drowning man that grapples at a twig, he charges her with giving the child, that on the night of performance was paid for bearing her train, (whom he styles her page) only half-a-crown, and not taking the boy by the hand, as acknowledging her sense of his fidelity ; such a conduct, the satirist says, would have added dignity to her rank : also says, that a certain lady on the stage, could not from the feeling of her generous heart, have acted otherwise.

I am as happy at paying the tribute of praise where it is due, as the satirist is to misrepresent the most exemplary conduct. I will allow Mrs. J——n, the lady to whom he alludes, every merit in her avocation, and that she has added to it by acts of generosity ; and which, a large annual income devolved to her, furnishes her with ample means ; I will further say, that from the time of that lady's first *debut* in the London Theatre, I ventured my opinion before the public, that she would excel in the comic and tragic line of acting : for which I was looked upon as one strangely prejudiced, or biassed by motives

motives of interest ; and I take this opportunity to declare, that I am not known to the lady, nor do I think that any proprietor of a daily paper, who favored my remarks with insertion, knew the author ; at that time she had only a trifling salary to depend upon for subsistence : the satisfaction I have felt in seeing my predictions realised, is ample compensation.

It is well *Petronius* cannot find any complaints against Miss F——n, amongst the intermediate personages, between the *alpha and omega* of the stage, her first manager and her page—the last of the group : but foiled in this, he shifts his ground, and blurs his paper with the gall from his goose quill against a young nobleman, beloved by all who have the happiness of knowing him, only for paying due respect to the lady his father had determined to raise to the dignity of his countess. Now to conclude his impotent railing, the satirist gives an account of a conversation the countess was honored with by the queen, on her first introduction at court. Herein he arrogates to himself more knowledge in physiognomy, than the renowned Lavater ever pretended to ; for at the conclusion of the conference

ence which he mentions, between her majesty and the countess, he presumes to read in the queen's countenance, a question she meant to ask her ladyship :—by this it is evident that the satirist is not acquainted with the *etiquette* of court, for no person in the presence ever speaks louder than a whisper; therefore it is next to an impossibility a third person could hear the conversation : so we may infer, he only contrived the phrases, to introduce a trite sketch of stage humour.

After trudging through the mire with this would be *Arbiter* of human dealings, even from the humble barn to the splendid court—I must take a retrospect to Green-rooms, and inform myself if liberality is the leading feature amongst stage characters; also, endeavour to assign reasons why it cannot be expected in those communities; one strong check to that praise worthy virtue he has involuntarily pointed out, by the distresses performers have felt whilst in strolling companies, and the dread they have of being reduced to the same miserable situation in case of prodigality.

But

But as *Petronius* is so well acquainted with the biography of the stage, he should have set forth that the strictest œconomy is necessary to be observed, even by the first rate performers in London, in order to supply the necessary paraphernalia for the stage, (even should the manager supply the various dresses from his wardrobe) viz. hair-dressing, millinery, gloves, stage-jewels, carriage to the theatre, and refreshments there on the nights of performance : these would amount to a larger sum than a country manager could afford to give as a salary to a capital actress for a season. Then, in case of sickness, a death taking place in the royal family, an accidental fire in the play house, the salaries are stopt ; or should a benefit fail through bad weather, unexpected amusements taking place on the same night, or other unforeseen causes, the performer is put under stoppages to pay the manager's charge for the house ; all which show the absolute necessity of an actress hoarding up some little, for such emergencies.

There are very few ladies that on first appearance on the London Theatres, but are obliged to run in debt for some necessaries, which
they

they expect to pay out of the profits of a benefit. If that should fail and they are otherwise unprovided, how can she answer a sully disappointed creditor, who might say—madam, I must be paid by such a day; a lady so admired cannot lack a friend to advance such a trifle as you owe me, I am pushed by my creditors and must have my money next week? With what spirits can a lady under such circumstances perform her part? she has ever the dread of a bailiff uppermost in her mind.

The creditor punctual to his own appointment, returns and seeing the actress is much distressed at not having his money ready, probably soothes her, by saying, I know a gentleman that would gladly advance double the sum you want, if you would only receive him as your friend; then, after extolling the qualifications of the gentleman, and the largeness of his fortune, leaves her to consider of it till next day, when his lawyer shall be employed. *Here's room for reflection even to madness!* she must lose her liberty, or sacrifice her virtue! many might prefer the last resource: too late the ruined fair one sees the consequence of trusting to chance, what she might

might have avoided by lessening her generosity, and living in strict œconomy.

There is no line of life more exposed to vicissitudes than the stage. Performers are insensibly drawn into expence, from the desire of pleasing and gaining friends ; but, if in the ripe harvest of favour, they neglect to lay up some little provision for age or infirmity, they are liable to be reduced to the dire necessity of imploring relief, from the humanity of their fellow performers.

Such was the fate of the late Mrs. B—d—y, who had enjoyed the first salary in the vocal line, and for her beauty and talents, was universally admired ; but she indulged herself in all the luxuries of the times, never considering that *beauty's a flower despised in decay!* till sickness and indiscretion reduced her to the lowest ebb, wasting away in famine and disease.

Mrs. W—t—n whose vocal powers delighted at Vauxhall, and Drury-Lane, in the comic strain ; hearing of a sister warbler's forlorn situation, solicited a contribution from all her associate

ciate performers in the Green-Room of Old Drury, and set an example of benevolence, by putting two guineas on a plate which she handed round. The principal performer, who never failed of making an audience sympathise with a tale of sorrow, or the tear of compassion to flow at her representing a scene of woe, after descanting upon the duty she owed her large and encreasing family, deliberately searched her well stored pocket, and drew from it reluctantly *three—yes, three shillings!*—the only contrast that appeared to the golden contribution which glowed upon the plate, to do honour to the gatherer of that well timed charity, which served to comfort their departing sister, and to cover her and her foibles, shortly after, in the cold grave.

Did the family of K——le only hoard up the money a generous public bestows on their superior talents, the cause of complaint would be trifling; but the attempt at monopolizing every claim to public favor in the Theatrical Line, must alarm the *amateurs*, and each candidate for fame. It would be no matter of surprise to see a new Pantomime advertised, composed by Master S——ns; his Mother, *Columbine*; S——n K——e, *Harlequin*;

D

J——n

J——n K——e, the *Skipping Lover*; Young
S——ns, *First Singer*; and *Maitre de Ballet*; with
the other parts, distributed in the family—similar
to what appeared lately in a country Play-bill *.

* THEATRE, ASHTON,

For the Benefit of Master and Mr. Hillyard, jun.

*Friday Evening, July 14th, 1797, will be presented a favorite
Tragedy, called*

DOUGLAS;

OR,

THE NOBLE SHEPHERD:

Douglass, Miss Hillyard.

Lord Randolph, Mr. Hillyard, jun.

Officer, Master Hillyard.

Servant, Master T. Hillyard.

Glenalvon and Norval, Mr. Hillyard

Lady Randolph, Mrs Hillyard.

Anna, Miss White.

End of the Play, a SONG by Mr. Hillyard.

To which will be added a Farce, called the

MAYOR OF GARRAT;

OR,

THE HEN-PECKED HUSBAND:

Major Sturgeon, Mr. Hillyard.

Sir Jacob, Mrs. Hillyard.

Bruin, Master Hillyard.

Roger, Master T. Hillyard.

Jerry Sneak, Mr. Hillyard, jun.

Mrs. Sneak, Miss Hillyard.

Mrs. Bruin, Miss P. Hillyard.

To conclude with the FRACA'S DANCE.

Admittance, 1s.—Children, 6d.

A great

A great rivalship has ever existed between capital players. Mr. Garrick would never suffer any person to act in the same piece with him, that was likely to share the applause. His favorite actor was Mr. P—k—r, a man without either figure or voice; as a player, scarcely above mediocrity, but always perfect and correct in stage business: this person was Mr. Garrick's second in tragedy, by which he assured himself of all the applause.

Formerly, actors in France and other countries were not allowed to be proprietors or managers of Public Theatres; but a Committee or Council was selected from the *Literati*—who closely examined the merits of every new piece, cast the characters, and attended to see it well got up, likewise were present at each public performance, to prevent any innovation, or *by-playing*; such attempts would have been punished, by sending the trespasser, when the piece was over, *aux cachot*, or dismissing him from the Theatre.

The late Mr. Quin, whose generosity has been recorded on some occasions, but was a very niggard in bestowing praise on a cotemporary per-

former, betrayed evident signs of being jealous of Garrick's rising fame : amongst many anecdotes that are on record of his sarcastic humour, is the answer he made to a friend, who told him Mr. Garrick was announced in the bills to perform *Sir John Brute* ; (a character in which Quin had always gained applause,) replied "David might play *Master Jacky Brute* ; but, by G—, he never can play *Sir John*." Another instance will shew, that, when an actor finds himself surpassed by another, he will vent his spleen against some defect in his rival's person, if he cannot find the public will be swayed by his opinion on theatrical merits. One night that Mr. G . . had played a very fatiguing part, Quin watched the moment, and took possession of his sedan chair, that was in waiting ; the men attempted to oppose him, and Garrick claimed his right ; Quin replied—"put that little fellow in the lantern, it will hold him with ease, but I shall keep my seat."

When Mr. Garrick appeared in the zenith of theatrical eminence, and became patentee and manager ; in course he became the butt, at which disappointed candidates for pre-eminence on the stage, and authors, aimed their envenomed shafts.

shafts. An author who could not persuade him to foster his dramatic writings, or to adopt his readings of Shakespear, published some infamous reflections on his partiality to the actor before mentioned, of so disgusting a nature, that no person for a long time, ventured to enter the lists, to vindicate the injured Roscius; 'till at length P—l H—n the old poet, who had long estranged himself to Mr. G—, took up the cudgels and made such an irresistible defence, that his brother Doctor K--n--k the malicious defamer, was totally silenced; his writings ever after held in detestation, and his name in contempt.

This unmerited censure had not subsided many years, when the envious dabblers in scandal revived it, to assist their compassionate intentions in favour of an object in distress; and under this spacious cloak, they meant to wound a character they could never emulate; the Doctor who had wielded his pen so successfully in the cause of truth and injured merit, wore the garb of distress, owing entirely to his partiality to liquor; for he would sit over his pot and pipe, whilst he had a penny in his pocket; but what friends he made over the bottle by his wit and humour, he

lost shortly, by his excentricities. The works he has left behind him, shew that he was a man of profound erudition and a master of the dead languages, but not of prudence to provide for the real necessities of life. This unfortunate man was pointed out by the invidious, as a walking object of Mr. G—'s ingratitude; the very man who had wiped from him, the stain of infamy that was spread upon his character, with jaundiced face and beggary on his back, in want of food and raiment. Some of Mr. G—'s friends told him the censorious town, wondered he did not make some provision for his old friend, who had long become a burthen to all his former acquaintance, and that the world would brand his memory with the sin of ingratitude, should the old poet die for want.

Mr. G— replied that he had long wished to find out some mode of relieving Doctor H—n, but if his enemies knew he had sent him any sum of money, they would immediately publish, that it was wages due, for his successful attack upon the scurrilous pamphleteer; besides there was another caution to be observed, the Doctor was of such a satirical cast, that if he knew from whence
the

the relief came, he would be the first to turn him into ridicule, in all companies he met. Mr. G— sent him some guineas, and promised to contrive a settlement that would put him out of the reach of absolute want : the poet most thankfully pocketed the cash ; but being for a long time unused to have so many *strangers* about him, he introduced his guineas from tavern to porter-house, and went his bacchanalian rounds for a few weeks, until death overtook him, as he was taking off his boots and going to bed.

Here again was fresh cause for censure ; a man that could not refrain from liquor, ought not to have been trusted with money. It was the surest way to get rid of an expensive incumbrance, and what Mr. G— must have foreseen ; therefore he accelerated the dissolution of a man, that had been his friend, and might with attention have been reclaimed, and made a valuable member of society. Alas, poor Garrick ! we shall not look upon thy like again ; in you we have seen, that detraction always pursues unrivalled merit, watching to destroy, by false colouring, its native brightness.

I have

I have heard Mr. G— and many other judges of acting, give their opinion, that a person of great sensibility, who suffers himself to be deeply affected with the passions he represents on the stage, as drawn by the poet, can never become a good actor; he must master his own feelings, or he will fail in making the audience feel the energy of the author's scenes: this doctrine may be proved by the following instances, and will shew that the stage is the only place where a person can form a judgment of his own power over the passions, which predominate in youth, and lead the sexes astray even in advanced maturity; for there, every temptation conspires to influence the passions, and such as retire from that state of probation with unblemished honor, must undoubtedly prove the most amiable and valuable companions for life.

A gentleman of family who had an university education, became a performer in the first cast; his figure and address were captivating, and a lady of fashion honored him with her hand: Mr. S—h was no less admired for his conjugal affection, than he was on the stage for the elegance of his figure and his merit as a performer; but

but unfortunately he did not possess strength enough, to keep his passions subservient only to the part he was to perform ; when the beautiful Mrs. H—y became the heroine, that he was cast to admire ; what at first was most capitally counterfeited, was soon perceived to be reciprocally felt ; the enamoured couple eloped *a la Sourdine* to the Continent, where fruition and satiety bringing on reflection, they saw their error, they broke off for ever all connection, returned like prodigals to England ; the gentleman whose conjugal affection never before had swerved, was received with open arms by his most amiable lady, and the enamorata retired from the stage, to a place of sequestered obscurity.

A more fatal proof that an actor should for the time, be insensible to the passion he means to represent, was given in the sister kingdom, by Mr. B—re—n ; who, by playing the lover to the first actress of the age, became so desperately enamoured with her, that it was plainly discoverable to the audience, and his feeling overpowered his utterance in the love scenes ; whilst the lady who personised every passion, and conveyed every sentiment as the author intended, to
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a delighted audience, felt no more impression from the beautiful figure of her youthful admirer, than the church-bell feels from the hammer, when it causes the hour of the day to be vibrated through the whole township. The unfortunate W—B—n struggling with a passion too strong for his reason, was conveyed to a lunatic assylum, where he ended his miserable days.

We have seen many ladies of quality that have been captivated by actors, and have honored them in matrimony ; also, in like manner have dancers on the opera stage made noble connections, and many noblemen and individuals of large property might be named, that have preferred the hand of an actress, to that of a lady of suitable rank and fortune ; yet I hear of no instances of such conjugal engagements, being dissolved by a sentence of divorce *a mensa et thero*, even in the reign when a play had no relish, unless it was tainted with the *fumet* of obscenity. A recent instance shews how much brighter virtue appears, when contrasted on the stage, with a few dissipated characters, by the charms of Miss W—s fascinating a man of rank and large fortune ; for his, could not be deemed

deemed a sudden gust of passion : his guardian, who from his title and office, is the highest in power next to the throne, suffered the visits of Miss W— at his house ; his lady publicly countenanced her ; and when the enamoured minor became his own master, they saw the matrimonial ceremony publicly celebrated, and the youthful couple made completely happy.

Amongst the numerous law causes for incontinence, which from term to term fill our news-paper columns, we do not find any brought by the Thespian corps, to recover damages for trespasses committed on their matrimonial property ; from whence we may naturally deduce, that if ever the stage was a seminary of vice, as by some writers so called, it is much meliorated and now may be viewed, rather as a probationary university, where female virtue is subject to every trial and to the strictest scrutiny, before it can obtain a *degree*, and be received into the *grande monde* as a *fellow*, and allowed an ornament to society.

By taking a retrospect to the educating of females in France during the monarchy, we can easily

easily find the causes from which the many infidelities after marriage originated. It was not customary for a husband to be seen with his wife; every lady of quality had a favorite friend, or *cicisbeo*, to lend his arm on the public walks, and to attend her in all her select parties. Many noble families did not possess property sufficient to portion off all their daughters, suitable to the rank they expected to obtain for them by marriage; therefore some of them were obliged to take the veil, whilst the other sisters were brought up as boarders at a convent, until the parents concluded an advantageous match for them; and frequently it happened the parties never saw each other, until the day appointed for celebrating the nuptials; and the young lady from childhood not having conversed with any man except her parents, and her father-confessor, having no predilection, she prefers marrying an utter stranger, to languishing in a convent; where her imagination had been inflamed, by the stories the Nuns relate to each other, of their love adventures or the disappointments in life, which made them retire from the world, whilst beauty was in its prime, and now to lament their *lost liberty*.

Indeed

The heart rending pangs of disappointment a parent must naturally feel, who through ill judged œconomy has risked a favorite child at an early age, within the walls of a convent for the sake of a cheap education, may be collected from the following circumstances. A widower in London had a lovely young daughter, that shewed a disposition for music, and the polite arts. The fond parent was persuaded to send her as a boarder to a convent in Flanders, where she was to remain till the age of discretion, when he hoped to see her return an accomplished young lady. Unfortunately, the commotions in France forced her to return, much earlier than intended : with pleasure her father viewed her ripening beauties, and delighted with the encomiums passed on her speaking French, dancing, singing, and playing the forti-piano, his fondness indulged her to visit public amusements ; but his employment required him to be most of the day from home, and frequently on journies ; a maternal eye was wanting to pry into the bent of the young lady's inclinations, and to find out what mode of thinking she had imbibed in a community, where incarcerated females are forced daily to act over and over again the same scenes.

scenes of devotion, and sing with dissonant voices praises which their hearts, benumbed with cloistered discipline, cease to feel.

Every prospect of returning peace made this young fair one, dread another trip to the convent, wearisomely to finish her education. Under such apprehension, and her youthful blood warm with recollection of the adventures she heard recited in the convent, no wonder! this precose fruit should be plucked without the family's leave—a public performer of agile feats, gained her unguarded affections, and stole a marriage! The father's feelings on seeing the money he had hoarded up, to get a suitable husband for his darling child, and make his latter days happy, had only served to procure him a horse rider for a son-in-law; may be easier conceived by a parent, than described by a pen.

Indeed it is wonderful that those equestrians, tumblers, and rope-dancers, are suffered to stroll about the country, stripping the common people of all their ready money, to procure seats at an exhibition which neither improves the understanding, nor excites any useful pursuit or emula-

emulation. Why are such mountebanks permitted to take infants as apprentices, and daily to crack and twist every joint to make the tortured little wretch supple, and scarcely allow them the necessaries of life. A child reared in that way seldom attains a middle stature, and always looks unhealthy. What advantage can the practice of such feats of activity be to civil society? We see Antipodeans by way of ridicule, represented on the stage in farce or pantomime, standing on their heads; but no person is so silly as to believe that any nation exists, walking with their feet uppermost: then, in the name of wonder! what benefit can it be to mankind, the encouraging such exhibitions?—But the reverse can easily be proved. The suffering of such illiterate, dissolute creatures, to perform in manufacturing towns is very dangerous; those little unfortunate apprentices are looked upon by children of their own age as superior beings; they seek their company, and practice feats of activity under their instructions, for which the boys give them any food they can purloin from their own families; and, as the entrance money to a public performance of that kind is only six pence, a very small quantity of cotton, thread, or yarn, picked
up

up each day in a manufactory, and which could not be missed or detected, but when put together, might be sold for more than the ready six-pence.

It is common to see in trading towns, young ladies going to market with a little basket on their arm, with one or two half-bound volumes of novels, which they exchange at a circulating library, and return home full freighted with food for the body and mind. I call the books generally read novels; for, in the catalogues you will see a hundred of that sort, to one volume of real instructive tendency: to an improper choice of books, may be ascribed many of the imprudencies the weaker sex is charged with.

No plays can be performed in any country, before they are read by proper judges or censors, and in consequence of their recommendation are licensed, by officers appointed by government for that purpose. They must all have a moral tendency, virtue rewarded, and vice punished, deceit and profligacy depicted with the most disgusting colouring, and folly exposed in the most degrading garb. Novels are subject to no tribunal before they are intruded upon the public; the

the more romantic, and the more interspersed with intrigue, with the more avidity are they sought after ; and girls in conversation are apt to characterise their acquaintance, by comparison with the heroes or heroines of romance ; and tuteurs are not sufficiently attentive to keep young ladies from such kind of reading : from those considerations I will venture to say, that more morality might be inculcated, and greater knowledge of the world might be gained in a Green-room, although miscalled a seminary for dissipation, than either in a convent or in the generality of boarding-schools.

I will admit that managers of some provincial Theatres do not sufficiently discourage improper behaviour behind the scenes : but the difference is immediately observed, when such a lady, as *Arbiter* snarls at, appears on a country stage ; there is such a commanding charm in virtue, that even the most profligate, revere it. Every one must, however, admit, that the dread of well timed satire, keeps many within bounds, whom flattery, the attendant on wealth, beauty, or talents, might seduce beyond the precincts of female prudence ; and others, who forget the

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friendly hands that helped to cultivate their rising genius, and introduced it to make a fortune in the world—such defaulters deserve the critic's lash, for they paralyze that benevolence which was always ready to assist claimants, worthy of public countenance.

We have seen personages of the most elevated rank made the topics of unprincipled scribblers. A lady of the first character, who shone the brightest star at court ; the theme of each lay ; no panegyric could surpass her beauty and qualifications ; in short, dedications and poetic compositions were daily laid at her feet ; she ruled the fashions ; mantua-makers, milliners, and all the purveyors of taste, paid her homage ; she rewarded poets for their merit ; on scribblers her pity bestowed something ; and her munificence was felt by all who applied to her. At length, her steward represented, that she had nearly overdrawn almost double her pin-money, (which is said to be 10,000*l.* a year) ; but, as he had orders from his grace to honor her calls to any amount, he thought it his duty humbly to represent, that it was most probable, should she distribute twenty times, over, the sums of money she did,

did, her craving dependants would not be satisfied.

Her Grace, astonished at the sums her generosity had lavished, resolved to reject all promiscuous applications; and soon felt the truth of her faithful Steward's remark. The English tongue, which but a little before was too incopious to express her exalted virtues, was now ransacked for its most embittered phrases to wither every flow'ry eulogium before produced. Caricature and doggrel satires were displayed in every stationer's shop, but without the degrading effect designed. Steeled with innate goodness of mind, she smiled at their malicious attacks; she would not encourage a retort to be made to confute them. Though ingratitude made her more cautious in the distribution of her bounty, it never closed her purse when indigence craved relief. When the disappointed satirists had exhausted all their venom, without obtaining the wished for bribe to be silent, they grew tired: for they saw that the mists they attempted raising to cloud the bright character of the lovely Duchess, dispersed, like a fog by the sun's rays, wherever

her grace appeared, and blessed the public with her presence.

The theatric *rage* is not more conspicuous in the highest spheres of life, who spare no expence to exhibit themselves on a private stage (superbly decorated,) than it is in the lower class of people, that contribute their mite, and perform in a garret, with bed furniture and window-curtains for scenes: it is from this set that itinerant companies of players are recruited, and sometimes, though rarely, a first rate performer from amongst them gets footing on the London stage. A female, especially, to make a figure in genteel comedy, should be taught from her infancy to dance a minuet *a la Vestris* (for the irregular steps, they now introduce give neither strength nor grace), which extends every muscle in the body to preserve the graceful equilibrium; so that, at any note-rest in the music or sudden pause, the dancer stands in attitude, and, when the music recommences, steps off with the first note exactly from the position in which he before had rested. From this practice, a performer is always steady on his feet, knows how to measure distances on the stage, and to keep equilibrium in attitude when checked
by

by surprise or threatened with immediate danger : and it teaches him also to raise his arms with grace when courteous action is requisite.

This remark was fully justified in the performances of Mrs. B—k—y, who was brought up to serious dancing, and the late Mrs. W—l—n, who was a comic dancer. The former excelled in playing the elegant woman of quality, the latter in the lively witty *Soubrette* ; and may be truly said to have had expression even at her fingers' ends, so true, that if her voice could not fill the house, her action would communicate to the audience the meaning of what she was singing.

Women picked up from strolling companies, are a long time before they are tolerably easy in their carriage on the stage, perhaps never, in genteel comedy ; let their annunciation be ever so correct, they lack the *tout ensemble* to please a judicious audience. In most country towns, should a performer play entirely from nature, he would get no applause. The multitude, in general, expect mouthing and rant in playing, else they do not think it acting. The late Mrs. Clive's house-keeper was persuaded to go to the play of the
Provoked

Provoked Husband, and see her mistress perform *Lady Townly* : on her return home, the servants eagerly enquired how she liked her mistress's acting ? She replied,—“ I did not see my mistress perform in the piece.” “ Lack-a-day ! did you not see her on the stage with a fine gentleman, when she sat down on a sofa ? ”—“ If you call that acting,” said the Housekeeper, “ I see no difference between her manner on the stage, and her behaviour every day when she receives company in her drawing-room.”—By which it may be seen, that some persons do not think it acting, if it does not surpass nature.

Men, besides the accomplishment of dancing, should be good fencers ; for nothing makes a man more firm on his limbs than this necessary art ; it extends every muscle and sinew. A man's figure is never seen to so much advantage, as in a lounge. It is a duty an actor owes the public, to learn the use of the small sword ; for what can be more disgusting than to see two well dressed fellows awkwardly stabbing at each other, without attitude or method ?

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It is to be hoped that the stage will again be looked upon in as honorable a light as it was, when majors and captains of the army, were not disgraced by their names being printed in the *dramatis personæ*, with their military ranks annexed; and in those days commissions in the army were much more difficult to be obtained than at present. It required as much interest to get leave to purchase, as it does at the present time to obtain one *gratis*. The service was not then disgraced by brokers advertising rank to be sold; such bargains were privately made at the agents office, and never appeared in the newspapers. At that time an officer could subsist himself better on half-pay, than he can now a-days, when it requires the strictest œconomy to exist on full. What must become of the officers that of course must be reduced at the peace? Those gentlemen that were regularly educated for a military line have no trades, they cannot dig, to beg they are ashamed: people being long accustomed to call them by their rank in the army, cannot easily forget it; then, if at any time a half-pay officer should through the scantiness of his pension fall into company with persons below him, he will be liable to insults; nothing
more

more common than for a fellow in his cups to ask, “ are you a captain, you cannot pay your way ? I earns more at my loom in five days, than your pay of a fortnight ? ” If an officer solicits to be a clerk or assistant in a ware-house in London, they will reject him, thinking him too proud to bear the insolence customers use at times when settling accounts. Then what must gentlemen do to eke out the trifling sums they receive half-yearly from government ? Officers on service in America and the Islands amuse themselves in winter-quarters, with getting up plays, and many of them were excellent performers ; men who had kept the best company, seen various countries, and spoke the languages, were best qualified to represent the different characters in the drama. Should his majesty revoke his *veto* *, the stage would be a genteel provision for reduced

* Mr. B—ly when a second-lieutenant belonging to the Orford, man of war, at the Havannah ; was seen by a gentleman performing Horatio in the *Fair Penitent*, in a room with some officers of the same ship. A few days afterwards Colonel H—e, who was to have played Chamont, and the officers there gave up the part, and no other gentleman would undertake it at so short a notice. Mr. B—y was perceived passing by an officer’s mess-house,

reduced officers; they would soon fill up the companies, and tradesmen's apprentices seeing

house, was recognized as the Horatio, by the person who saw him in that character, and was requested to give his opinion (under pretence of deciding a wager) on the manner of speaking a speech in the Orphan; in which he appeared quite perfect, and was easily prevailed upon to accept of the part of Chamont: which he performed so well on the theatre built by the officers of the garrison, that he surprised the whole audience, afterwards appeared with equal applause in Archer.

On Mr. B—y's arrival in England at the peace, he was put on the half-pay list; but his merit as an actor had reached the ears of Mr. Coleman from some of his brother officers, who hearing that he assisted his mother and sister out of his little pittance, with a benevolence of heart that guided all his actions, offered him a liberal salary on the stage: this was looked upon as *entering into another service, his name was ordered to be struck off the half-pay*; but he consoled himself for the loss of his rank, by comparing 700l. a year he made by his acting, to the 35l. a year he had been starving himself upon, to do the duty of a grateful son. He is now retired from the stage with a handsome fortune, besides a considerable property he got with his wife, to spend the remainder of his days in affluence amongst the numerous friends his good conduct has acquired. But to make him some amends (now he does not want it,) for being deprived of his half-pay, he has been given an appointment as barrack-master, which is better than 300l. a year. If a Mr. Younger had introduced Mr. B—y to play Chamont, he most certainly would say, he had been that gentleman's rise, and proclaim him ungrateful if he forgot him?

them-

themselves so barred out, would give over attending on spouting clubs, mind their master's business, and find it preferable to that of a theatre. Another advantage would be, that officers knowing the dresses peculiar to each country, would not suffer Northern nations to be cloathed in light silks, and Southern Indians to be dressed in bear-skins: improprieties of that kind ought particularly to be avoided in country Theatres, where the audience in general, depend upon seeing things represented nearly as if they were in the countries where the scene is laid; and should they enter into discourse about the people of such places, with those who have travelled in those countries, they would be laughed at for their more than Beotian ignorance.

Petronius Arbiter, at the closing of his *honest* history of the Countess, says, "we have not extenuated one fact, nor have we set down aught in malice. Those who envy her ladyship's elevation, may think we have spoken too favourable; while those who regard her with more partiality, may think we have related circumstances, which in some degree lessen the consequence

quence of a peeress."—My opinion is, the name of that disgrace to literature was taken merely to intimidate the lady, and in expectation that her friends would buy up the copy—supposing a man who adopted such a signature, would not stick at publishing any scandalous reports, to gain a sale for his pamphlet; or, if that failed, he should write it in such a style as he could answer it himself; and by that means draw a sum both from the parties concerned, and from the public. These were most probably the selfish sensations he felt, on committing his book to the press; which shews his disposition to degrade virtues he cannot emulate, and that he would be more severe if he was not certain her ladyship's reputation was established throughout life, far beyond the power of his pen to tarnish. We have instances of literary women, as well as men, being bribed to silence: at this very time it is rumoured a fair frail is about to resume her pen, and disclose connections for the same purpose.

By the tag he has put to his satire, one might suppose him an unfortunate author that had his theatrical pieces either damned by the audience,

audience or rejected by the players; what else could induce him to add a note with an observation, designed to degrade all performers, extracted from obsolete acts of parliament, declaring "all players vagabonds and excommunicate, of course not entitled to Christian burial?" He condescends however to say, "that Charles the Second bettered their situation, denominated a portion of them his servants, they wore a livery given them annually at the lord chamberlain's office, and on great occasions waited at the royal table, and partook of the regal crumbs." It must be allowed such attendance at the court the author's avowed ancestor belonged to, would have been a disgrace and the regal crumbs infectious;—but men, of the highest rank in these kingdoms, solicit the honor of attending on our most gracious Sovereign, and being lords in waiting at his palace. As this writer has discovered so much ignorance in court honors, and, if he knows the history of the stage from its rise, seems inclined to suppress every record that can do it honor; I shall make a few extracts, before I close my letter, from Theatrical history.

We find that China was the first country in which theatres were established, and are traced back to a period of more than 3,000 years. "The early principle of the ancient drama was to represent living portraits of the times and manners, to reprehend vice, and inculcate morality and virtue through the medium of action and dialogue." The Chinese Tragedies were all on moral subjects, shewing examples of their Heroes and maxims of their Philosophers. Actors were held in an honourable light, although slaves in China. The Emperor Thynghti married an actress, and placed her on his throne. The Jesuits in their mission to Goa acted a play, called the establishment of the Christian faith, and made many converts: also they performed in Siberia many plays of the same cast. Catharine the second, of Russia, civilized her barbarians by introducing plays and operas: 400 years after China, Athens adopted the drama: they built their theatres so large the actors were obliged to wear masks, which were machines to extend their voice: they had also vases of tempered metals, that helped the tones of the voice and music. Ten judges were appointed to decide upon oath, which piece had merit; to reward it, and
punish

punish pretenders that had none. One poet was actually whipped, and Sophocles was rewarded with the prætorship of Samos for his theatrical productions.

Plays were held in such estimation in Egypt, that, when there was a great scarcity of corn in Greece, the King refused to send any unless they would let him have the tragedies of Euripides to grace his library at Alexandria. Necessity made them comply; and, in return, he suffered the Athenians to import what quantity of corn they pleased, free of the usual tribute. Alexander the Great made the greek poets known. The Persians sung the works of Sophocles and Euripides. It was lucky for them, at the carnage of Sicily, that could repeat those verses; for their lives were spared in consequence: so extremely nice was an audience, they rose up, and would have a poet banished for introducing these words on the stage, "Riches are the sovereign good of mankind, and may well excite the admiration of men and Gods", but were appeased at the catastrophe, when they found that the admirer of riches met with a dreadful death. It was thought Scipio Africanus had written part of Terence's

Terence's plays; the Senators, and Roman Knights, together with the plebeians assisted at the public theatrical exhibitions. The amphitheatre built by Julius Cæsar had seats for 100,000 spectators; and Augustus finding that Julius lost a great proportion of his popularity by not appearing at public amusements, went constantly to the theatres, and by mixing with the people carried all his measures. Andronicus was so often encored in one of his pieces, that he became hoarse, and the audience made a slave recite the words whilst Andronicus performed the actions. This in time was adopted: they thought the player having only the action to mind, would be more spirited and expressive, whilst the man at the back of the stage spoke the words in musical measure, which regulated the motions of the actor. A King from the neighbourhood of the Black Sea asked Nero to let him take a celebrated performer of pantomime to his country; for he was at a very great expence to get interpreters, and that man by his action alone, could speak the language of every nation.

In the time of the Romans, the Spaniards had theatrical amusements, but they were checked by
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the inroads of the Goths ; afterwards they were revived by the Arabs, who introduced a superstitious drama—the birth of our Saviour, Martyrdom of the Saints, the Creation of the World, and many other pieces, most of them on religious subjects. We may see by the elevation of Fari-nelli, a vocal performer, to be a minister of state at the court of Madrid, actors of merit in that proud superstitious country, were not looked upon as vagabonds and excommunicates. The first regular tragedy that was acted in Europe after the expulsion of barbarism, was *Sophonisba* ; it was performed in Italy in the pontificate of Leo the Xth, and written by Bishop Trissino the Popes nuncio ; also another called *Calandra*, the production of Cardinal Bibiena ; here is a further proof that in early times they looked upon the theatre, as a place where morality might be imbibed and vice put out of countenance. Ranuse Farnese, duke of Parma, had an old nobleman in his court, that gave himself up to all sort of debauchery : in order to shew him the effect such a course of life, represented upon the stage, would have on the audience, he caused a play to be written shewing the character of his courtier, but in such a delicate manner as could only be known

known by themselves ; the old man confessed to the duke at the first representation of the piece, he felt the rebuke ; he thanked him most sincerely in private, he turned off his women, and it served him as a monitor for the rest of his life.

Dramatic exhibitions have not existed in France above five hundred years. The representations were, holy mysteries, and performed in the church ; in 1402 the confraternity of St. Dennis's-street, made their theatre in the hall of the hospital of the Holy Trinity, which became an hospital again in 1548 ; they had gained a deal of money, and built a theatre, had it licensed, on condition they played nothing but had a moral tendency. Those actors performing before Louis XIIth, some speech seemed so pointed at him, his courtiers desired he would punish the players : the king answered, " no ! they do me justice, they think me worthy to hear the truth."

In the year 1680 the king united two companies of players that were in Paris, fixed, himself, the number of actors, and regulated the salary of each according to merit ; some he dis-

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charged

charged, and gave to others pensions ; the theatre opened at one o'clock in the afternoon, and closed at four, as there were no lamps in Paris at that time. A general assembly was held every Monday at the theatre, when all authors that had pieces to offer, publicly made application to the whole body ; nothing was refused but by the general consent, after the productions were impartially examined, and their merits or demerits fairly argued.

When Cardinal Mazarin was in full power, he was the first who introduced Italian Operas, he sent for performers from his own country, and they represented a piece in Paris, *La nozze de Peleo & de Thetide*, a piece in three acts, and to crown it with applause, Louis the XIVth, danced on the stage at this *wedding*. The French people were delighted to see their king, young, in figure majestic, and amiable, dancing gracefully ; though a little before he was driven out of his capital. The opera of Perseus by Quinault and composed by Lully, was much indebted for its success to Prince Deitrichtein, son to the Grand master of his Imperial majesty, who danced in it with such elegance and grace, that
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he astonished the whole audience, he appeared on the stage in a mask, which was then the custom, and took the principal dancer's place, in all the various movements. Corneille who wrote under the patronage of Cardinal Richilieu, revived the taste for the drama by his *Polieuctes*, which was read, and universally applauded in his presence, before the literary tribunal, held at the Hotel de Rambouillet ; the celebrated actor Baron, in playing the character of Severus, gave the sentiments with such modesty and true colouring, and suited his voice and action in that part, where he communicates his doubts about the Pagan religion, that the audience was astonished with this new mode of performing : they saw nature itself—for, before this, the public had seen nothing but the most extravagant action and bombast. The subject of the piece was very awful, Baron exerted himself and gave it such force, that he was universally admired, and he raised a respect for the actors, which before was never paid to them. The performance of *Polieuctes* made the public begin to consider the drama in a moral light, and a most respectable entertainment ; it increased in reputation every day, and in the year 1641, the following favor-

able *arrêt* was published, to encourage and sanction the profession :

‘ In case the actors regulate the action of their performances, so as to be entirely exempt from impurity, we will that their exhibitions—as by this means they will innocently amuse the public—be considered as void of blame, or reproach, and also that their occupations shall not be pleaded as an impediment to the exercise of any business or connection in public commerce.’

Corneille was looked upon in France as the father of tragedy ; and Moliere, after having divested their comedy of buffoonery, and impureness of stile, which reflected a disgrace on the taste of the nation, he brought it forward with elegance and regularity not to be found in the comedy of any other country. His comedy of *Tartuffe* gained him more notice than any other, though the representation of it was greatly persecuted. Physicians, misers, fops, fools, and every sort of excentric character, was ridiculed with severity ; and those were seen to laugh at the ridicule of themselves, and applaud, whilst they were receiving the lashes of satire ; but one class

class of men strong, as all the former put together, and more vindictive, united all their power to suppress it.

The *hypocrites* insinuated that the *Tartuffe* was an impious satire on religion, and that it ought to have been burnt by the common hangman ; they were implacable at finding Moliere so generally supported ; they would not allow the learned men and the king altogether, had a right to sanction a play, without the concurrence of the public at large ; the passions of the devotees were worked upon ; they, being a weak people, joined the cabal, and an infatuated curate ventured to pronounce it, a work full of profaneness and impiety ; in quality of a priest he had a right to anathematise the author. Notwithstanding the king countenanced the performance of the piece, he was willing to quiet the people, though he was displeased at their folly ; and he advised the name to be changed to *L'Imposteur*, and that the principal character should represent a layman.

Though Moliere's *Tartuffe* was a satire on hypocrisy and bigotry in general, it was looked
upon

upon as the real character of the bishop of Autun; and, on the second representation, there was an order of parliament to suppress it. But two years afterwards the king gave a peremptory order it should be performed, and it never after was impeded. When the party ran high this comedy was reprobated in the highest degree; Father Bourdaloue preached against it, and the following is an abstract from the Sermon he preached on that extraordinary occasion,

“ As true and false devotions have
“ great similitude in their outward appearance;
“ as the same raillery that attacks the one *primâ*
“ *facie* attacks the other; as it is impossible to
“ know the true from the counterfeit, without an
“ examination of the hearts of men; as hypo-
“ crisy cannot be censured without raising un-
“ just suspicions against true piety, all virtuous
“ men ought to decry such a work.

“ What has this author done? he has repre-
“ sented on the stage an imaginary Hypocrite,
“ who, by his actions, turns the most holy things
“ into ridicule; who appears scrupulous on mat-
“ ters of no consequence, but in affairs of im-
portance

“ portance is guilty of the most heinous crimes ;
“ outwardly a penitent, he is inwardly a profligate ; and under the appearance of the most
“ austere piety, he practises the most consummate villainy.

“ Who will point out to the world this particular man ? It is impossible, and it cannot be
“ implied but to an unworthy suspicion of religion
“ in general, and the principles of its possessors
“ in particular. This is cruel and immoral, and
“ no government ought to tolerate it.” But no offence was taken by the clergy at a man in a monk’s habit being represented on the stage the very same season clambering a ladder of ropes to a married woman’s bed-chamber, repeating with drollery as he mounted—*Questo per mortificar la carne*. We have had instances in this kingdom of Reverend Divines wincing, when the stage has given a rub to their galled withers ; they have published a number of volumes with the intent to prove, plays are sacrilegious mockeries of holy writ, and it is a deadly sin to read them ; they have made abstracts from every play extant, compared with lines similar in the bible, from which they pretend they were copied, of course those compilers are guilty of ridiculing the scriptures.
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But it is wonderful those hypocrites, during their long study, and time wasted in reading lewd plays, satires on the vices of the age, had never found out that the drama in England, was established on the same plan as in Rome and Athens ; where Philosophers, Poets, Ecclesiastics, Senators, and Emperors, not only wrote plays, but performed with actors on the public stage !

In the earliest history of the theatre in this country, we find that the plots of all the plays, were taken from the old and new testament. In London, at the theatre in Clerkenwell, they represented *the creation of the world, the nativity*, and many other plays modelled from scripture : some of those took up two or three days in the acting, by adjournment.

Shakespear makes his Hamlet allude to the représentation, of one of those historical scripture-pieces, when he says :

———— I have heard
That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,
Have by the very cunning of the scene
Been so struck to the soul, that presently
They have proclaimed their malefactions.

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The story related is to the following purpose:—Whilst a scene was performing on the stage, representing the murder of Holofernes, a person in the gallery made a dreadful shriek, when she saw the woman in the attitude of driving a nail into the General's head as he lay asleep; which disturbed the audience; but she still continued her cries, saying repeatedly and with violent agitation, they are shewing how I murdered my husband; ay! that's just the way I killed him, and fell into violent convulsions. She was conveyed to her house, every one thinking she was seized with a sudden fit of phrenzy; but she persisted in accusing herself, and so circumstantially, that she was examined before the magistrates. She confessed every particular, desired them to dig up her husband's grave, and they would find he had not died a natural death as was reported, but by a nail which she had driven into his temple: the body was examined, and the nail was found to have perforated the skull exactly as she had described, which corroborating circumstances served fully to convict her, and she declared the justice of the sentence the moment before her execution. This, amongst numerous instances on record, shews dramatic exhibitions

exhibitions have a greater power over the human mind, than ever yet experienced from the most energetic sermon delivered in the pulpit.

As Shakespear is universally allowed to have surpassed all his predecessors, and his works to this hour are deemed unrivalled, I will look upon him as father of the English drama : but, in the reign of Elizabeth, the drama was clogged by abstruse study, and pedantic affectation ; and treated in the reign of James, with most rigid scruples ; nature was overwhelmed by art, and genius was stopped in its progress. By degrees it began to shake off those absurdities, and borrowed fresh colouring from the French ; intrigue, gallantry, and love, assumed a place, but manly force and energy was checked by the hypocrisy of the times and the republican form of government that usurped the state. The drama was entirely overturned during the civil war, but it revived when the kingly government was re-established. Many of the old surviving actors were brought again upon the stage from a state of distress ; and once more the works of the immortal delineator of nature were brought forward to delight and instruct the world.

King

King Charles introduced on his arrival in England, many dissolute manners; his court made a jest of all regular systems in life, obscenity was received as wit, religion was ridiculed, intrigue and breaches of the matrimonial tie were applauded on the public stages. The love scenes in *Venice Preserved* were too insipid for the relish of the times, when nothing but broad humour, or high seasoned acting, would go down with the audience; which obliged Otway to interlard the piece with scenes of depravity, between *Aquilina* and the *Senator*, in order to save his tragedy from rejection.

Many pieces too insipid for those days, pruned of their loose extravagancies have been introduced of late, but nothing pleased like the modern plays; sentimental comedy took the lead; where might be seen postillions, chambermaids, and nurses, gossiping sentimentally, or scolding delicately; in the midst of this prudish time, the grossest tricks were applauded in pantomime; the word caterwauling which never fails to produce a laugh, when spoken by *Justice Woodcock*, in *Love in a Village*, caused the *Black-moor washed white*, to be hissed off the stage; yet
the

the next season opened with the *Wife's Revenge*, and a pantomime, in which was introduced a caterwauling, between two wild cats, and was much applauded. When Garrick retired, the stage lost its mirror of nature ; all his acting now, his successors studied action in tragedy, is stiff and cold, as the marble statue on his tomb ; and the tones of his sepulchral voice, are only suited to scenes of horror and black designs ; in comedy his representation is hard as the sculptor's chisel, compared to the lively colouring of Ruben's animating pencil. Though nature denied the late Mr. H—d—n, figure or feature for the stage, he overcame by genius and application the defects of person, and nearly consoled us for the loss of Garrick. This gentleman was rather pedantic, and elaborately strove to introduce a mode of acting *Hamlet*, different from any of his predecessors, but the critics conquered him in the public prints, and he gave it up.

If we judge from the young performers we have seen in the country, after being favorably received on the London stage, they all aim at copying the acting manager, in sermonizing the level speaking, and the head shaking like a mandarin

mandarin on a chimney-piece. If some great genius do not shortly start up, and blend the old with the new school for acting, players will become such monotonists and attitudinarians, that their step and action might be traced in each performance ; and in towns where machinery supplies the labour of men, women, and children, why may we not expect to see speaking automata, set in motion by a steam engine, and performing all the capital parts in tragedy ?

Managers in London have modes of engaging the press to be favorable ; in country towns no editor of a paper will take in a theatrical critique, unless signed by the manager, for fear of losing the printing of his bills and advertisements ; the actors count it very unjust to see any printed remarks on country performers. But reason points out the very reverse ; a provincial theatre is the only walk, where the manners in high life, and the fashions of foreign nations, can be brought in view of persons who never go far from home ; what opinion can a plain honest farmer form of a king, when he sees a noisy ranting fellow, in a tarnished Spanish habit, playing a British monarch, and speaking with a
vulgar

vulgar brogue. It is certainly a great evil to mislead the ignorant, and take their money for false representations; but it may be remedied, if people of rank and taste in the neighbourhood of theatres, would patronize the performers, and coalesce to make country managers abate the enormous sum they charge players for the expences of the house on each benefit night; for many times it happens after a performer has done his utmost for a whole season, to serve and to ingratiate himself with the public, by some unexpected event he has not charges in the house, and has acquired a loss instead of a benefit.

I may be censured for mentioning the lower class of performers, such as equestrians and *Vol-tigeurs*, at the same time that I am endeavouring to prove, the profession of the stage in London, is far from a degradation, but should be held in an honorable light, whilst guided by prudence and virtue; but I was drawn into the digression, by quoting a case to prove, how exceedingly watchful a parent should be over the education of a daughter.

I have no doubts but *Petronius Arbiter* is thoroughly acquainted with the biography of the stage.

stage. I do not write to lead him, but to shew how mighty absurd, if such an obsolete law exists as he mentioned, not to abolish it ; for when monkish superstition was at the height, the Kings, the Cardinals, and the Jesuits, performed on the stage ; yet we never heard of any being refused christian burial. I remember the favorite comedian in Paris, named *Droin*, killing a nobleman in a *rencontre*, who had insulted him whilst he was performing, and the king pardoning him, on condition he should never play any more in his capital. However he performed afterwards in many principal towns of France, and was universally caressed. The satirist seems to have found after he had written all his malice could suggest, that he had rather elevated the character he had laboured to degrade ; and so concluded with attempting to throw an odium upon all professors of the stage ; for he well knew nothing could prejudice the people in London, against the lady he satirised ; but he flattered himself that those in the country, who put their confidence in what they see in print, would greedily buy up his pamphlet ; which in the metropolis was despised, and looked upon as a foul libel on female perfection.

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The same opinions float at present, that were held in former times, respecting the manners and dispositions of a people; strangers are apt to judge of a nation, or of a province, by the taste they shew for public amusements. *Dionysius* king of *Syracuse*, wishing to know the state of learning at *Athens*, *Plato* sent him the plays of *Aristophanes*; therefore it is the duty of every person of power and influence, to watch over the conduct of the stage; that in future days his memory should not be disgraced, for neglecting to employ his authority, or his literary abilities, to protect the stage, and performers of merit, against the tyranny of selfish proprietors; and the orphan daughters of *Melpomene* and *Thalia*, from rude attacks, and from the calumny of jaundiced satire*. I must take a final leave, and on this occasion shall subscribe myself, with the greatest respect, Madam, to your superior abilities.

Scriptor Veritatis.

* The Scorpion surrounded by fire, enraged that he can do no mischief turns his sting against himself and dies. I will furnish as keen a poison to the satirist on virtue; Her Ladyship is building a large School near her country residence for poor children, and endowing it with a large income to support Teachers.



